

Contact: Jennifer Doyle, Director of Development & Community Investment  
Tel: 717.236.5040  
Email: [jdoyle@tfec.org](mailto:jdoyle@tfec.org)

**TFEC Receives \$75,000 Community Innovation Zone Grant from  
Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare**

*Corporate and Community Partners Give Additional \$88,000 to Strengthen Early Learning Programs*



**Harrisburg, PA, November 7, 2014** – On Thursday, October 23, the PA Department of Public Welfare held an event at Downey Elementary School to announce the South Central PA Community Innovation Zone grantees. The Foundation for Enhancing Communities’ (TFEC) early childhood community collaborative initiative, Parents & Partners, was one of twelve statewide grantees to receive \$75,000 for up to three years.

In addition to the Community Innovation Zone grant, TFEC was able to secure \$88,000 in matching funds from the PNC Foundation, The Hershey Company,

Harrisburg Public Schools Foundation, United Way of the Capital Region, Greater Harrisburg Foundation a regional foundation of TFEC, and many private donors.

“Investing in early childhood education is one of the best things we can do to improve the economic vitality of our region,” said Jim Hoehn, PNC Bank regional president in Central Pennsylvania. “Through PNC Grow Up Great, we have advocated for early childhood education over the past 10 years and we have seen the measurable impact it provides at-risk children and their families.”

“The community collaborative initiative addresses crucial economic and educational issues,” said Janice R. Black, President and CEO, TFEC. “Efforts to increase school readiness, literacy, and family engagement will have an immediate and positive impact on the lives of children and families now and into the future.”

The overarching goal of the **Parents & Partners** program is to wrap support around the whole family while also strengthening the teaching professionals who work with those families. This collaborative initiative will broaden community resources by giving children and their families the tools they need to be successful while also building strong partnerships between family, the community, early learning providers, and the schools. The Early Childhood Engagement Group, formerly the Dauphin County LEARN group, who meet monthly to collaborate on ways to improve programs for children and their families, guides this work. Program initiatives include:

- Development of a Dauphin County **school readiness calendar** with activities and resources

- “*Welcome to Kindergarten*” books specifically for entering Harrisburg Elementary schools (starting with Foose and Downey in the first year)
- Pre-kindergarten **family fun events** which will occur several times a year
- Transitioning to Kindergarten programs
- “*Quality Time With Me*” a readiness and literacy program for families to help decrease the achievement gap by teaching parents to be their child’s first teacher
- Community outreach and education campaigns
- Training and support for early childhood providers, kindergarten teachers, parent liaisons, and community partners
- Transitioning events to help early learning providers and kindergarten teachers work together to create a seamless transition for children moving from preschool to kindergarten
- Engagement of the business community and legislators

Quality early education strengthens our workforce and the entire community. Data will be collected, measured and outcomes will be evaluated and used for programmatic improvements. The program will continue to seek new partners with expertise in supporting children and families.

This collaboration includes many community partners working together to improve access to early childhood education, school readiness and family engagement. We are thankful for their support, participation, generous in-kind donations and dedication to our mission. Partners include Harrisburg School District teachers and administrators, Head Start, Temple University Nonprofit Evaluation Services and Training program, Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance, Hamilton Health Center, WITF, Dauphin County Library System, The Joshua Group, Pinnacle Health, Early Intervention, Capital Region Literacy Council, Interfaith Shelter, and the principals, teachers, and Parent Liaisons at Foose and Downey Elementary schools where much of the programming will take place the first year.

Many future partners have been identified and have already committed their participation including: the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, the Nurse Family Partnership, Harrisburg SMILES, Pressley Ridge, Community Action Commission, and the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of Commerce.

For questions or information about Parents & Partners, please contact Jennifer Doyle, Director of Development & Community Investment, at [jdoyle@tfec.org](mailto:jdoyle@tfec.org) or visit [www.tfec.org](http://www.tfec.org).

###

Photograph Participants (L to R): Barb Minzenberg, Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development and Early Learning, PA Department of Education; Dr. Sybil Knight-Burney, Superintendent, Harrisburg School District; James Thompson, Vice-President, Harrisburg School District, Board of Directors; Janice R. Black, Present and CEO, The Foundation for Enhancing Communities; Jennifer Doyle, Director of Development & Community Investment, The Foundation for Enhancing Communities; Jeanne Predmore, Project Manager, Capital Beginnings, The Foundation for Enhancing Communities; Jo Pepper, Executive Director, Capital Area Head Start

#### **ABOUT THE FOUNDATION FOR ENHANCING COMMUNITIES**

The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC) is a community foundation which aims to stimulate philanthropy and enhance the quality of life in the community through accumulating, managing, and disbursing financial assets while serving as a catalyst and neutral convener to meet a wide range of community needs in the south central Pennsylvania counties of Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lebanon, and Perry, and also in the Dillsburg area. Regional foundations of TFEC include the Greater Harrisburg Foundation, the Franklin County Foundation, the Mechanicsburg Area Foundation, the Perry

County Community Foundation, the Camp Hill Community Foundation, and the Dillsburg Area Foundation. For more information on TFEC, please visit [www.tfec.org](http://www.tfec.org).